Queen’s Garden

Worksheet

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1. Describe the *stasis* in the play: where, when, who, what, etc. in a paragraph.

The initial setup was in the “Westside” of Los Angeles around 1965. Brenda is the oldest girl of a mix race family who works in her Dad’s pharmacy and deals with issues of poverty and discrimination with her race straddling the line.

2. What is the *intrusion*?

The race riots that occurred during Brenda’s time at high school. This event set off racial tension that had been underlying amongst her friends and classmates.

3. What is the *unique factor*?

Black Panthers occupying Brenda’s school and inciting a riot.

4. What is the *dramatic question* that should be answered by the end of the play?

The fate of the children of Westside. Kali and Smoke who embraced its culture and life and Brenda who left it all behind.

5. Provide an illustration of the *two kinds of exposition* that the play has in it.

Brenda’s NARRATOR describes most large changes in scenery and setting.

Brenda has her own in character narration and thoughts.

6. Identify the most *theatrical moment* in the play and of what importance it seems to be.

The climax of the standoff between Kali and Smoke. With Dreamer’s point of view being added it was a unfortunate representation of the cyclical nature of growing up in Westside. It showed that for every person that escaped (Brenda) there were those who lived and died in Westside.

7. List some of the *themes* of the play.

Racial inequality.

Poverty.

Familial loyalty.

Culture vs Self

Inability to completely escape from one’s upbringing.

8. What do the principal characters *want* and what are some *obstacles* that stand in the way of them getting what they want?

Want: Brenda initially wants to raise up out of the poverty stricken neighborhood she grew up in, all the while bringing as many people with her as possible.

Obstacle:  Her student’s poor education, disrespect and her inability to connect with them cause her students to ignore her help and advice.

Want: Smoke simply want to live with his extended brotherhood in Westside.

Obstacle: The dangerous nature of his and Kali’s business shatter the friendship the two had and leads a deadly standoff.

Want: Kali wants to find his place in the world.

Obstacle: but is unable to cope and progress outside of his neighborhood which he feels is his “source” and the only thing he truly knows.

9. Describe some possible *images* in the play and how does the *title* help us understand the play.

The title “The Queen’s Garden” and Auntie Mary’s matriarchal position describe the “Westside” as a sort of kingdom with warring factions of different races within it.

10. Briefly define the *family relationships* that are examined in the play.

Brenda and her more robust education has trouble relating to her extended family and relatively lack of sense outside of Westside. Her relationship is strained with her family when things like politics emerge.

Smoke is an orphan who spends most of his time with Kali’s family due to how poorly his uncle treats him and essentially becomes his brother.

Sherry and Dreamer, Sherry once had all the privilege but has opted to stay with Smoke and their child. She becomes the concerned mother towards the end as their relationship becomes deeply strained when he joins a side of the war.